Self-Imployment IN SECRET:

CONTAINING

I. Evidences upon Self-Examination.
II. Thoughts upon Painful Afflictions.
III. Memorials for Practice.

Left under the Hand-Writing of that Learned and Reverend Divine,

Mr. John Corbet.

Late of *CHICHESTER.*

With a Prefatory Epistle of Mr. John Howe.

The Third Edition, carefully Corrected.

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The Preface.

THE *Character* of this Holy Servant of *Christ*, is already given by an every-way ſuitable * *Hand*, in what part it lay open to the Obſervation of others, His more *Interiour Portraicture*, which is contained in theſe Papers, was (as it could only be) drawn by Himſelf.

* *In his Funeral Sermon by Mr.* Baxter.

Why it is now expos'd to publick View, there is no need to be ſcrupulouſly careful in giving an Account. It muſt be acknowledg'd, there is uſually with the Holyeſt Men, a modeſt Shyneſs of communicating theſe Privacies of their own Souls. Their *Inner-Man* doth ſhew its own Face with the more difficulty, by how much it is more beautiful, and worthy to be beheld. And ſo it was

with this Excellent Person, as his Inscriptions upon these Papers shew; [*The State of my Own Soul,*] and [*Notes for my Self,*] signifying their intended Use, was that of a Mirrour to represent himself to his own Eye, not to other Mens.

Yet this Aversion (though great) hath not been always Invincible, or such as no Reasons to the contrary could over-sway. What are the *Psalms* of *David*, and sundry *Memoires* of Holy Men in Scripture, that were remotest from Ostentation, and vain Glory, but Records of the most secret Dispositions and Motions of the *hidden Man of the Heart*, made publick for the Instruction of their own, and succeeding Ages. As also, the other Published Meditations, and Soliloquies of some of the Greatest Worthies in the Christian Church, must be understood to have had the same Pious Design. Nor hath a Generous Benignity, in some Heathens, permitted them to Ingross to themselves,

or

or envy to the World those pleasant Sensations of their own Minds, which *they thought* may be some way Instructive and Useful to *other* Men: As that † Renowned Philosopher and Emperour is instance, that scrupled not to write, and leave behind him for this purpose, twelve Books concerning his own Life.

† *Marcus Antoninus.*

The Thing cannot be culpable, if the Design be innocent, which will in great part be discernable in the manner of doing it, when it is with unaffected Simplicity, and without studied disguise: As we commend a Picture, not so much for its being Specious, as that it is like the Face. So have good Men in giving Accounts of themselves, not spared to put in the Distempers, and Disaffections of their Spirits, that are as great Blemishes and Deformities, as a Wart or Mole on the Face; which the Faithful Pencil must as curiously express, as the greatest Decencies.

However, if this Publication be Praiſe-worthy, nothing is to be Arrogated to the Author, as, if it be thought Blameable, nothing is to be Derogated. For though the Work it ſelf (which carries its ſufficient Praiſe with it) be owing entirely to him (or rather to the Grace of *God* in him) the making it publick, is from the Advice, and deſire of ſome Friends, willing to impart what was once moſt private, for a publick Good.

It is but the Diſſection of his Soul, leſs to be regretted by Friends, when he is now out of Sight, and much more Uſeful, than that of his lately pained Body.

And as Anatomy diſcovers all the curious Contexture of our Bodily Fabrick: Here are Vivid Repreſentations of *Faith*, *Love*, *an Heavenly Mind*, *of Humility*, *Meekneſs*, *Self-denial*, *Entire Reſignedneſs to the Will of God*, in their *Firſt* and *Continued* Motions: with whatever Parts, and Prin-

Principles beſides, compoſe the whole Frame of the *New Creature*, as if we could perceive with our Eyes, how the blood in an Humane Body, circulates through all the Veins and Arteries, how the Heart beats, the Spirits fly to and fro; and how each Nerve, Tendon, Fibre, and Muſcle, perform their ſeveral Operations. Here it may be ſeen, how an Heart touch't from above, works and tends thitherward, how it depreſſes it ſelf in Humiliation, dilates it ſelf in Love, exalts it ſelf in Praiſe, ſubmits it ſelf under Chaſtening; how it draws in its Refreſhings, and Succours, as there is need.

To many, who have ſeen ſo ſteady, uniform, and amiable a Courſe and Tenour of Life; How grateful is it to behold the ſecret Motions of thoſe inward latent Principles, from whence all proceeded? Though *Some others*, would look no further than the Advantages in external Reſpects that accrue by it. As though *Some* content themſelves

to know by a Clock, the Hour of the Day, or partake the Beneficial Uſe of ſome rarer Engine: *The more Curious*, eſpecially any that deſign *Imitation*, and to compoſe *ſome like thing*, would be much more gratify'd, if through ſome pellucid Incloſure, they could behold all the inward Work, and obſerve how every Wheel, Spring, or Movement, perform their ſeveral Parts and Offices towards that Common Uſe.

What is here Preſented, as it may be of great Uſefulneſs to all that ſeriouſly deſign the Chriſtian Life; ſo it hath a ſpecial Uſe for ſuch as deſign it not, and who think there is no ſuch thing.

It may peculiarly ſerve to convince ſuch, as are willing to think as ill as they can of the *calling*, and *Office* of the *Miniſtry*, that there are *ſome* that ſerve the *Lord* in that Work, who do not ſtudy ſuch Subjects as are here Exemplify'd, only to frame Diſcourſes of them, wherewith to entertain the

the People for an Hour; but for their own Uſe and Practice too. That do *Live* the things they *Teach*; And Eat of the Food they prepare for others: That are in good earneſt, and moſt intent to *ſave themſelves, and them that hear them*: And do really venture their own Souls upon the ſame Bottom, upon which they would perſwade their Hearers to venture theirs, taking all poſſible care, *Leſt when they Preach to others, they ſhould themſelves be Caſt-a-ways.*

The very Opinion, That we Preach only for Forms ſake, and to keep up the Cuſtom, and believe or regard not what we our ſelves ſay (as well as the thing it ſelf) is no ſmall (nor perhaps uncommon) hinderance to the ſucceſs of Preaching at this Day. It is hard to be ſerious in Hearing, what I think, he is not ſerious in himſelf who Preaches it. If I apprehend he Trifles, 'tis a great Temptation to me to do ſo too; You may ſee, this Worthy Man conſidered the Goſpel,

as a *Gospel of Salvation*, and not only *Taught*, but *Used* it accordingly. How Sollicitous was he to ground *substantially*, and *strongly*, his *Hope of Eternal Life*! How warily did he feel his Way; and labour to Understand, and Know *Practically*, upon what Terms he might safely appear before his Judge!

To them who do not so, this ought to be taken for a *Reprehensive* Example, and may be very *Directive* to them that do.

That it may attain its proper Ends, is the serious Prayer of

One desirous to promote the common Salvation,

John Howe.

Mr. COR-

Mr. *CORBET's*

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

State of his Soul.

His Introduction.

IN order to peace of Conſcience and aſſurance of my good eſtate towards God, it muſt in reaſon be ſuppoſed, that I may rightly underſtand the marks of ſincerity ſet down in Gods Word, as alſo the predominant inclination and motions of my own Soul; and that I may be ſo far aſſured of my right underſtanding of the things aforeſaid, as to have no reaſonable ground of doubting thereof. For I have no other

ordinary

ordinary way to know my ſincerity in order to the ſaid peace and aſſurance, but to examine it according to my beſt underſtanding by the marks thereof ſet down in Gods Word. In this ſelf-examination it is requiſite that I uſe all Diligence and Impartiality with conſtancy; and that I earneſtly pray for Gods aſſiſtance in it, and heartily offer my ſelf to his ſearch, as David *did,* Pſal. 139. 23. *Wherefore if upon the moſt impartial and diligent ſearch, that I can make, according to the beſt of my underſtanding, together with earneſt and conſtant Prayer to* God *to aſſiſt me therein, as in my greateſt concern; it doth moſt rationally appear to me, that the predominant inclination and motions of my ſoul are agreeable to the marks of ſincerity ſet down in* Gods *Word, then my conſcience doing its office aright, is to judge for me accordingly,* viz. *that I am ſincere. And in this judgment I am to acquieſce, becauſe it is the judgment of* Gods *Agent and Miniſter,*

which

which he hath ſet up within me to judge under him of my eternal ſtate, according to his Law, by which he himſelf doth and will judge me. God *hath the ſame aſpect upon the Soul, which Conſcience his Vicegerent hath, as it from time to time, or ordinarily judgeth not againſt him or without him. but under him, and according to his judgment, either acquitting or condemning. To this purpoſe the Apoſtle ſpeaketh.* 1 John 3. 20, 21. *If our Heart condemn us,* God *is greater than our Heart, and knoweth all things; If our Heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards* God.

The

The Srate of my Own Soul, according to the ſtricteſt Search that I can make.

Pſal. 139. 23, 24.

Search me, O Lord, and know my Heart, try me and know my Thoughts, and ſee if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the Way Everlaſting, Amen.

The following Particulars were ſet down in *Decemb. Jan. Feb.* An. 1663.

AS far as I am able to diſcern my Heart and Ways, I have choſen the Lord for my Portion; I take up my reſt in *Him*, and not in the Creature. To love and fear, and admire, and bleſs him, and to have communion with him is my chief joy.

And

And the eternal Vision and Fruition of God is my great hope. I would not only have God hereafter, but here in this World for my chief good. He is even now better than all the World.

I come to God by Jesus Christ. And as I believe in God, I believe also in Christ, and rejoice and glory in him, and acknowledging my own sinfulness and unworthiness, I rest entirely on him as the ground of my justification to Life, and of all favour and acceptance with God.

I receive Christ as my Lord, and give up my self to him. I let him into my Heart by Faith, I esteem him precious, and am willing to suffer the loss of all, that I may win him; I desire to know him in the Power of his Death and Resurrection, and am much grieved, that I do so weakly experience that power, and feel it no more operative in me in my dying to Sin and the World, and in living and walking in the Spirit.

I do

I do not ceaſe to lament the more heinous Sins of my Life, and cannot forbear the continual imploring of the Pardon of them. I do not return again to them, and I reſolve never ſo to do; I watch and pray, and ſtrive againſt all ſin, but eſpecially againſt thoſe ſins, to which I am more eſpecially inclined; my conflicts are daily, and am put hard to it. But I do not yield up my ſelf to any ſin, nor lye down in it, yea, I do not ſuffer ſinful Cogitations to lodge in me. Howbeit I am many times much diſcompoſed, damped in Spirit, deadned in Duty, diſtracted in my Studies, and moleſted and hindered every way by the ſin that dwelleth in me. But I reſolve, that Sin ſhall have no reſt in my Soul, and that I will never enjoy it. Though I cannot keep ſin out of my Heart, yet it doth not reign in my mortal Body, nor do I yield my Members to the ſervice of it.

I would fulfil all Righteouſneſs, and owe nothing to any Man but Love.

Love. I had a hundred-fold rather ſuffer wrong than do wrong.

It was ſaid of Chriſt, that no guile was found in his Mouth, and of the faithful Company that followed the Lamb, that no guile was found in their Mouth. And that it may be ſo with me I endeavour with my whole Heart.

I truſt God with my chiefeſt outward Concernment, even with that, about which I am moſt ſollicitous, and wherein to be ſatisfied is of great moment to me, for that it hath as great an influence upon my Spirit, as any outward thing hath. And I do believe that God will provide for me herein, or otherwiſe ſupply the want of it. My earneſt of God is, that my outward condition may be ſo ſtated by his Wiſe and Gracious Providence, as I may be leaſt expoſed to temptation, and beſt diſpoſed, and furthered unto Duty.

I have an Inclination to ſeek Self, particularly in vain applauſe, and that

that in Religious Services; and herein I have been highly guilty, but I ſhame my ſelf for it before God, and I am willing to be ſatisfied in the Praiſe, that comes from him alone; and I truſt through his Grace, that I can deny my ſelf in matter of Reputation to do his Will.

I love the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and all his Saints. The broken eſtate of the Church, eſpecially by inteſtine Evils, is a great trouble to my Spirit. The ſcandals of Profeſſors I am truely grieved at, and I would not by their weakneſſes ſeek to excuſe my own faults, or an advancing of my own Virtues.

I have no ſetled Bitterneſs and Revenge againſt my Enemies, but I love, pity, and pray for them. As concerning *God*'s Enemies, I am more provoked, but I would not be inhumane or cruel againſt them. For the wrath of Men worketh not the Righteouſneſs of *God*.

I contemn none, *I* would not imbitter

bitter the Spirit of any. *I* would answer all obligations of courteſie, as accounting it a Righteouſneſs. *I* would not inſult over the weakneſs of any; and this is partly out of Natural Tenderneſs and Moral Conſiderations; and *I* find, that the goodneſs, and kindneſs of *God*, the meekneſs, gentleneſs of Chriſt, hath hereunto made impreſſion upon me.

I find upon the review of my Life paſt, according to the cleareſt Judgment that *I* can make, that *I* have not gone backward, but proceeded forward, in the ways of Godlineſs. And this increaſe *I* reckon not by ſudden fits now and then happening, but by the main progreſs of the work in the total Sum.

I have been grieved that *I* am no more elevated in the hope of Heaven, and that *I* cannot attain to a longing deſire to be gone hence, and to be there with Chriſt. *I* have laboured to raiſe up my Heart, and have had enlargement, even when deadneſs and

flatneſs

flatneſs had been upon me. *I* think with my ſelf ſometimes, were my Evidences clear for Heaven, *I* would exult to be gone hence this very hour; but *I* find not this readineſs at all times.

When *I* have had a good enterprize in hand for God's Glory and ſome publick benefit, *I* watched againſt Vanity of Mind, and vain Glory in carrying it on; and *I* deſire purely to aim at God's Glory, and to be ſatisfied with my Reward in him. And *I* take heed, that *I* forget not my Mortality, when *I* am purſuing that deſign; but *I* would fain bring up my ſelf to this frame, to be contented to be taken hence in the midſt of it, as judging that *I* ſhall be no loſer by my removal, and God cannot ſtand in need of that Service.

Lord forgive my inordinate Self-Love, which hath diſturbed the Actings of pure Charity in divers paſſages of Moment. For Self-Love in my ſenſitive Appetite hath had motions contrary

contrary to the Love of God and my Neighbour. Nevertheleſs my judgment hath diſallowed it, and *I* have for the moſt part acted againſt it, and for that which the Love of God and my Neighbour did command.

O Lord forgive my ten thouſand Talents. *I* come to Jeſus Chriſt, who hath made ſatisfaction, and lay this heavy reckoning to his account. Lord forgive my *Iniquity*, for it is exceeding great.

Theſe following paſſages were ſet down, March 4. *An.* 1675.

UPon the review of the foregoing Evidences, after Twelve Years, I find through Grace the ſame abiding in me, and more and more Rooted. And ſome particulars which did make me more to doubt of my good Eſtate, I find to be ſince that time in a greater degree Vanquiſhed.

I have done what in me lies, to call to remembrance all my remarkable

ble Sins, from my Childhood and Youth till now: And as far as I can Judge, I have repented of them, both generally and particularly. And I now Repent of them all, from the bottom of my Heart, with a ſelf Abhorrence, if I can know my own Heart by the ſtricteſt, and moſt impartial ſearch that I can make.

Upon the beſt Judgment that I can make of the Nature of Sin, and the Frame of my own Heart, and Courſe of Life; I know no Sin lying upon me, which doth not conſiſt with habitual Repentance, and with the hatred of Sin, and with an unfeigned conſent that God be my Saviour and Sanctifier, and with the Loving of God above all.

The Mercy of God toward me, in the prolonging of the day of Grace, in the ſtrivings of his Spirit, in his Chaſtiſements, in the checks of Conſcience, in the Recovery of my Soul out of Diſtempers and Backſlidings, doth greatly affect my Heart, and ſtrongly

ſtrongly engage me to Him; and doth often call upon my Soul, and all that is within me, to Bleſs his Holy Name.

Though my Spiritual growth be very low and ſlow; yet to this preſent time, I have not grown worſe, but better; ſpeaking of growth in the whole ſpace, or greater ſpaces of my time paſt, and not every particular Day.

By Prayer, and endeavours long continued, I have in ſome meaſure overcome a ſpecial very Sinful Diſtemper of Mind, and gained the contrary Temper againſt a natural Propenſity.

Though my Faith in Chriſt be weak, yet to have part in his Promiſes, I am ready to part with all that is dear in this World, and I have no hope of Happineſs, but in Chriſt.

Though I have had doubtings touching the promiſed Salvation, yet I know that as to my own Felicity, I prize nothing more than that Salvation,

tion, being the Glorifying and Injoying God for Ever, and I Embrace it as my beſt Good. I Love Chriſt, whom I have not ſeen, and I am affected towards him, as towards a perſon, who taught and did the moſt excellent *things*, and promiſed a moſt excellent State to his Followers, and purchaſed their Redemption at the deareſt rate.

I am heartily grieved for loving God ſo little, yet I am ſure, this I Wrote according to a full perſwaſion at that time. I love nothing more than God, and in my eſteem and choice, I prefer the Spiritual, Divine, and Heavenly Life, incomparably before the Carnal, Animal, Earthly Life. And this eſteem and choice, is made good by performance in Ordinary.

I Love to Love God. And I deſire this Love not only as an evidence of my Salvation, but for it ſelf. I had much rather have a heart to love Him perfectly, than to have all the Riches,

Riches, Honours, and Pleaſures of this World.

My Conſcience bears me witneſs that in the preſent exerciſe of my Miniſtry, I have no ſelf-end of Worldly Advantage, or Reputation among Men, or any Intereſt of the Carnal Mind: but if the Command of Chriſt, and the neceſſities of Souls did not oblige me to this Service, I ſhould gladly retire to Privacy and Solitude.

My Temporal Eſtate is mean and low, yet I am contented with it, and humbly bleſs God for what I have. I Live in as narrow a compaſs for Expences, as I can, that I might have ſomething to give to the Poor, and to be helpful to thoſe that are in Need, according to my Ability. And as God hath required of us to Love Mercy; and our Saviour hath ſaid, *It is a more bleſſed thing to give, than to receive*; ſo I have more pleaſure in giving a Portion to the Needy, as far as my mean Eſtate will bear, than in laying out for the Delight of

my own Senſe, or Worldly Conveniences. And this proceeds not from a conceit of Merit in any thing that I can do, but from a Love to pleaſe God, and do Good.

Though I have a good Knowledge about the premiſes, yet I am apt to waver about the Concluſion. And though I apprehend the Evidences of my Sincerity to be clear, yet a Timorouſneſs remains in me.

Though I have not as yet overcome the Fear of Death, yet I am ſure, that the unwillingneſs that is in me to Dye, is not that I might enjoy the pleaſures of Senſe, or any Gratification of the Animal Life.

I feel in my ſelf a burden of Sin and Corruption, much Senſuality, Earthlineſs, Selfiſhneſs; nevertheleſs I judg, there is that Predominancy of Love to God, and Holineſs, which I hope is unmoveably ſeated in my Soul; whereupon I hope that it cannot be, that I ſhould be, caſt out of his bliſsful Preſence into

to that Perdition which is a State of immutable hatred of him. And I apprehend, that the moſt horrid, and helliſh ſtate of Hell it ſelf, lyes in its Everlaſting, and utmoſt Enmity againſt God.

Thus I am ſearching and trying my heart and ways; and what I find by my ſelf, I write down, that I may have it by me, for my relief in an Evil day, and an hour of Temptation. For I muſt expect the time, when by weakneſs, or anguiſh of Body or Mind, I may be diſabled to recollect my ſelf, and duly to ſtate the caſe of my own Soul. And the Powers of Nature may ſo fail, that I may have but a very weak Apprehenſion of what I have to do in this great Concernment. I am warned by the parable of the ten Virgins to look to it, that together with my Lamp, I may have Oyl in my Veſſel, and be ready to enter in with the Bridegroom at his coming.

Lord be merciful to me a ſinner, to me one of the chiefeſt of Sinners.

O my exceeding ſinfulneſs! O the Riches of thy goodneſs towards me! Should not I loath my Carnal Self? Should not I grieve for grieving thy Spirit? I deſire to do ſo, I hope to do ſo. Do what thou wilt with me, ſo thou Pardon, and Sanctify, and Save me. I am afraid of thy Judgments, I can endure but little, O how weak is my heart! Nevertheleſs I will endeavour, and I truſt through Grace, that I ſhall be enabled to bear thy Correcting Hand. Thou art Wiſe and Holy. Thou art Merciful and Gracious, Thou retaineſt not thine Anger for ever, becauſe thou delighteſt in Mercy. O ſpare me, and conſider me, and deal with me not after my Sins, and reward me not after mine Iniquities; but as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far remove my Tranſgreſſions from me; comfort me, and ſatisfy me, for I wait for relief from Thee. Whatſoever befalls me, I will put my Truſt in Thee. I believe, O Lord, help my

my unbelief. Lord increaſe my Faith. O my God, I lye at thy Feet and Mercy, I put my ſinful diſtreſſed Soul into the hands of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and I reſt on the Covenant of *grace* made in Him, as all my Salvation, and all my deſire, *Amen*.

More Obſervations touching the State of my Soul. *March* the 27*th*. 1676.

O The wonderful Mercy of *God* towards me a moſt vile and wretched ſinner, in convincing, rebuking, and awakening me unto a Self-abhorrence, and an utter Deteſtation of my *ſins*, my ſpecial *ſins*; ſo that I canot be reconciled to them. Since the more powerful awakening of my Conſcience, I never have, and am perſwaded never ſhall return to thoſe former Sins, which made a Breach between *God*, and my Soul. I hate every Sin impartially. A ſinful State, is in my internal Senſe,

an horrid and an Helliſh State.

I find my ſelf firmly reſolved to give up any part of my worldly Eſtate, that I ſhall be found to hold to anothers Wrong. If it be doubtful where the Right lies, I am reſolved firſt to endeavour a Reference to Conſcientious knowing Men; and if that cannot be firly had, to ſubmit it to a Legal Tryal, with a deſire that Right may take place. I know not that I hold any ſuch Eſtate, or that there is any doubt of my Legal Right to any thing that I poſſeſs: but I have made a ſuppoſition for the Tryal of my own Spirit.

When I had a Father or Mother, I would have truſted them, to defend or deliver me from any Evil, from which it was in their Power to defend or deliver me. In the ſame manner I now truſt to my Loving *Wife*. Why then ſhou'd I be ſuſpicious of *God*, in whoſe Hands I am? Why ſhould I doubt of his dear Love, and tender Mercy towards me, or call in queſtion

queſtion his good *Will* to preſerve, or deliver me from any Affliction, that would be too hard for me to bear, or to ſuſtain; and comfort me under any Suffering, which he ſees fit to inflict upon me?

If when I was more careleſs, and forgetful of God, and when I ventured upon breaches with him, he was pleaſed to convince me of my Sin, and to rouze me up to a greater care, and to make me more earneſt for Pardon, and for Healing, and for all needful Grace, and more throughly Reſolved to follow him throughout; ſurely he will not refuſe me in my Addreſſes for more Grace; and a more confirmed State of Holineſs. If I follow on to know the Lord, I ſhall know him, and ſee his Salvation.

Though Death and Judgment be of dreadful Conſideration; though God be Holy and Juſt, and I be vile, and guilty, and worthy of eternal Perdition; yet why ſhould I

doubt of Mercy and Forgiveneſs, and of Support and Comfort in the Darkneſs of Death, and of Juſtification in the Day of Judgment, from a Merciful and Faithful *God*, through a Powerful Redeemer and Advocate; ſeeing as a humble Penitent Believer, I lye at his Feet, and caſt my ſelf into his Arms, and wait on his Grace, and am reſolved to keep his Ways, and never to return to Folly.

☞ I more deſire to be Sincere, than o know that I am ſo. The comfort nd delight of being and doing good, I ſet not ſo much by, as the very being, and doing Good. To Love God, and to be Conformable to him, is that, which I moſt of all deſire ſhould be in me.

I will truſt God in his Ways. I will ſtrive againſt an over-timorous ſollicitude about my own Salvation, and will commit my ſelf to God, who is the infinite Goodneſs and Love, and I will lye down, and take my Repoſe therein.

I

I am grieved, when *I* obſerve, or hear of the Scandals of ſome Profeſſors, and the diſorders of thoſe, that are in Charity to be judged ſincere, and the follies, and frailties of the more ſincere and upright. And it humbles me, by cauſing me to reflect upon my ſelf, and my own Faultineſs and Weakneſs, and Proneneſs to Offend; and it makes me more to deſire the Heavenly Society, and to be among the Spirits of Juſt Men made perfect.

My Sins of Senſuality in every kind and degree, *I* ſearch out, and Repent of. *I* am kept by Grace, from groſs Sins of this ſort. *I*n the Gratifications of Senſe, which are Lawful in general, *I* Scrupulouſly dread Exceſs, and undueneſs of Circumſtances. How earneſtly do *I* deſire an abſolute Purity!

All Envy, Unrighteouſneſs, Uncharitableneſs, Uncompaſſionateneſs, Undutifulneſs, and baſe Selfiſhneſs, which is the Root of all, *I* have Seen,

Lamented, and Abhorred. The motions and ſtirrings of Mind, that way, are ſuppreſſed and diſlodged: *I* will never give way thereunto.

Self-applauding, Self ſeeking, in matter of Praiſe and Honour before Men, *I* ſtrive againſt. *I* deſire to be as ſincere to anothers Reputation, as to my own, *I* would not value others, by their regard to me, but by their true worth. *I* would be contented to be little in the Eyes of others. This *I* unfeignedly deſire and endeavour, and *I* hope, that *I* have in it ſome good Degree,

All my Omiſſions, and Negligences in the Work of the Miniſtry, in Preaching, in perſonal private Application, *I* bewail, and heartily reſolve upon more Diligence and Faithfulneſs.

Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O Lord; but remember me, and ſpare me according to thy great Mercy in *Chriſt Jeſus*, the great Propitiation for Sin, in whom *I* deſire to be

be found, and under the Covert of whoſe Wing *I* ſtand, that *I* may be ſaved from thy Wrath, and enjoy thy Peace, and live in thy Preſence, where is fulneſs of Joy, and Pleaſures for evermore.

Feb. 22. 167$\frac{3}{3}$.

GOD will never Damn in Hell any Soul, that hath the habitual predominant Love of God, though culpably Remiſs, and otherwiſe Sinful, while he remaineth ſuch; yea Hell, and ſuch Love of God, are inconſiſtent.

I Love the *Holy Will* of God with all my Heart, and hate all Diſconformity to it. Nothing is more grievous to me, than to diſpleaſe God; and nothing is more pleaſant to me, than to pleaſe Him.

I ſtrive after Chriſtian Perfection.

I labour to be unbottomed of Self, to die to Self-advancement, to Self-gloriation, and to all Selfiſh Joys, and

to

to live wholly in, and to God, and to have Self ſwallowed up in the Love of Him.

I labour in the Work of Self-reſignation, that my Will may be confined to, and included in the Will of *God*.

I ſtrive after Patience in its perfect Work, and do find a Willingneſs to yield to *God*'s Will in my Chaſtiſements. *I* ſtill Juſtifie God, and do not entertain an hard Thought of his Dealing with me; but conclude, that it is altogether Holy, Juſt, and Good, and for the beſt.

I feel my Sin a greater burden to me, than my Affliction. *I* had rather have Health of Soul in a Body full of Pain, than Health and Eaſe of Body with a Diſtempered Soul. And the Senſe of my great ſinfulneſs diſpoſeth me to Patience, under my afflicting Infirmities of Body.

I narrowly watch my Heart, that it may not lodge, or admit a vain Thought. When *I* am ſurprized with

with Vanity, *I* ſuppreſs it as ſoon as *I* obſerve it.

I am very fearful of offending in a Word. When on the ſudden, and by *Incogitancy*, *I* have ſpoken a Word, which upon ſecond Thoughts is doubtful to me, though *I* had not ſuch doubt in the ſpeaking of it; *I* have been much perplexed about it, and engaged my ſelf to a greater Watchfulneſs.

Aug. 1680.

SUrely *Chriſt* hath my Heart. Whenſoever *I* ſwerve from *Chriſt* in a *Thought*, *Word*, or *Deed*, it is by *I*nadvertency and Surprizal againſt my fixed Principle; and *I* have great Regret at it, and Loath my ſelf for it.

If I were out of all fear of Damnation, *I* had rather be holy than unholy; and *I* take pains, and uſe God's means to be holy in oppoſition to the Fleſh, and *I* make it my chief Care. And *I* do this, becauſe *I* make the Enjoying

Enjoying of God my chief Good; and rather than loſe the Hope thereof, *I* would willingly undergo the Sufferings of this Life, which lead to that Bleſſed Fruition, not excepting the Fiery Trial it ſelf.

Aug. 1680.

I Hope, when the End cometh, my God will ſay to me; Dear Child, thy Warfare is accompliſhed, thine *I*niquity is pardoned, enter thou into my Reſt. Therefore, *I* will both hope, and quietly wait for the *S*alvation of God. *I* will hope to the End. *S*trengthen me, O my God, that *I* faint not.

October the 4*th.* 1680.

I Have no deſign, *I* purſue nothing contrary to God's *I*nтereſt: but all my Deſigns and Purſuits are for God and Holineſs. *I* think, *I* am ſure of this, if *I* be ſure of any thing. My great

great Aim, and Care, and Labour, is to cleanſe my ſelf from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, and to perfect Holineſs in the Fear of God.

To whom *I* yield my ſelf a *Servant* to obey, his *Servant I* am: But *I* do not yield my ſelf a *Servant* to *Sin*, to obey it; but *I* do yield my ſelf a *Servant* to God, to obey Him. The deſign and buſineſs of my Life, is to do his *Will*.

The Workings of my Heart in my Affliction.

Auguſt the 5*th*. 1680.

THE *Will* of God in laying this Affliction upon me, *I* unfeignedly approve as Holy, Juſt, and Good: And *I* am unfeignedly willing to bear the Affliction, as it is an Evil laid upon me by his *Will*, till the time come, in which he thinks fit to remove it. *I* watch, and pray, and ſtrive,

ſtrive, that *I* may not give way to a Repining Thought againſt his Holy Hand. In this point the *Spirit is willing, but the Fleſh is weak.* My Mind doth really conſent to God's Diſpenſation, and to my Submiſſion, and being moſt agreeable to his wiſe and gracious Government, and moſt conducing to my Salvation. But my *ſenſitive part*, and my Mind alſo, as it is in part unrenewed, weak, and ſinful, doth greatly reluctate; ſo that I am put hard to it, and I muſt ſay, *I am willing, Lord, help my unwillingneſs.* *I* have not obſerved in the ſeveral days, that a *thought* of direct or poſitive Diſcontentment, or vexatious Commotion of Mind, hath been admitted by me; nevertheleſs, I ſee to my grief, that *I* fall exceeding ſhort of that Quietneſs, Contentation, and Cheerfulneſs in my Condition, and of that Freeneſs of Self-Reſignation to God's Will, that I deſire, and his Goodneſs calls for.

I wreſtle with God by importunate

nate Prayer, that this *Thorn* in the Flesh might depart from me; that this Distemper might be removed, or so mitigated, that I might be in some comfortable Ease, and get a more cheerful Freedom in doing my Duty. Yet *I* would not wrest this Relief out of his Hands unseasonably, and without his good Will, and his Blessing. *I* would wait his time, and desire to have it with his love and favour, and with a saving Benefit. And so my earnest Desire thereof, is limited with Submission to his holy Will. Yet *I* find that this Submission is no easie matter, but that *I* must take pains with my own Heart, and that it is God, who must work my Heart to it, and keep under the Flesh, which is always ready to rebel. *It* is hard to be willing to bear my wearisom Condition: And, O how weak is my *Heart*, and ready to sink, if it be not upheld by a strength above my own! O let *his* Grace be sufficient for me, and let his Power be made perfect in my Weakness.

I feel my self bettered in the inner Man, by this Chastening. *It* hath furthered Mortification, and Self-denial, and done much to the breaking of the *Heart* of Pride, and to bring me on towards that more perfect Self-examination, for which *I* labour. *It* hath much deadned the World to me, and my desire to the World. *It* makes me know in earnest the emptiness of all Creatures, and how great my Concern is in God. *It* drives me close to *him*, and makes me to fetch all my Comforts from *him*. *I* see of how little value all outward Contentments are; and not only in my present afflicted State, but if *I* were at Ease, and in full Prosperity. The sense of this Benefit to my Soul, is the great Means of bringing my *Will* to that weak Degree of Submission to God's Will, to which *I* have attained.

O that *I* could live more by *Faith*, in this trying Affliction. *I* endeavour to impress upon my Soul those Arguments,

ments, which the Scripture affords for Patience and Long ſuffering with Joyfulneſs. But this will not do the work, unleſs the Spirit of Faith and Patience be given from him, from whom comes down every good and perfect Gift. *I* pray, *I* cry to my Father, that he would give me the *Holy* Spirit, according to his Gracious Promiſe, that *I* might ſhew forth the Power of *his Grace*, and that *I* might not diſhonour *Him*, nor diſcourage *His Children*, nor reproach *Religion* by my weakneſs. And in my bearing of it well, my Reputation is nothing regarded by me, in Compariſon of the Honour of *Chriſt*. Him *I* deſire to Glorifie both in my Obedience and Patience.

I do not love God the leſs becauſe of his correcting Hand upon me. As my Neceſſities drive me, ſo His Love draws me, and my Love brings me to *Him*. *I* look to *Him* as my Father: And, Shall *I* not honour my Father, and give him Reverence, when

when *I* am chaſt'ned of him? The Lord is my Portion, ſaith my Soul; therefore, will *I* hope in *Him*. *I* will wait for the *Lord*, who hideth his Face; *I* will look after *Him*; He retaineth not *His* Anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in Mercy. Therefore he will turn again, and have Compaſſion upon me. *If* he kill me, *I* will put my Truſt in *Him*: for *He* will not caſt me off for ever, if *I* cleave to *him* with Faith unfeigned; but even through Death it ſelf will *He* ſave me. *He* will bring me forth to the Light, and *I* ſhall behold *His* Righteouſneſs. When *I* ſay, *What ſhall I do, in caſe of ſuch or ſuch troubleſome or dangerous Conſequents?* My Heart anſwers, *Be not careful, God will provide; I will leave it to Him.*

Beſides the Natural Deſire of Eaſe and Reſt, the Senſe of the Temptation which *I* am liable to in this Condition, makes me importunate to be delivered from it. *I* feelingly know the Weakneſs of my own Heart, and *I* am

am not ignorant of the *Devil*'s Malice and Subtilty, and how he will make the fierceſt Aſſaults, where *I* am *weakeſt*. Whereupon *I* tremble in my ſelf, for fear of being tempted, and ſhaken, and greatly amazed. And upon this ground, reſpecting my *Souls* Safety, *I* judge an humble and patient *Importunity* with *God*, for the removing or moderating of my Diſtemper, to be my Duty. Yet to keep me from being over-ſollicitous and anxious in this thing, *I* conſider, that *God* doth govern and limit all our Temptations, and will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able; but will with the Temptation, open a way for us to eſcape. Nevertheleſs, *I* find, that *I* do much offend by too great a Vehemence of deſire to be delivered from this grievous Burden, without due Submiſſion; alſo by too much Diſquietneſs and Dejection, when after ſome expectation of a Benefit by that Means, *I* perceive that my Hope thereof is like

like to be fruſtrated. The *Lord* help me to carry it better, and as *I* ought to do, and keep my Mind in its right Frame.

My buſineſs under this Affliction is to be careful about my own part, and to leave God's part to his care. My *part* is to do my Duty, and to get the benefit of the Affliction; but to remove it, is God's part. Let me perform what belongs to me, and *what* belongs to *God*, *He* will certainly perform in his own time and way. The Sum of my Duty is Graciouſly to comply with the diſpenſation, and to behave my ſelf ſuitably to it, and to pleaſe and honour God under it. Accordingly in this *I* labour, and in this way *I* ſeek for Comfort. And firſt *I* juſtifie God, and judge my ſelf. God exerciſes his own Holineſs and *Juſtice* in this *Caſtigation*. His *Juſtice* and Holineſs *I* approve, and accept the puniſhment of mine *I*niquity, and exerciſe an hatred of the *S*in, for which *I* now ſmart. *I* will bear the in-

indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him, and I repent with a Self-abhorrence; And I lye in the duſt at his Feet, and wait on him, until that he have Mercy upon me, and I am glad to receive Mercy upon his terms.

I have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope that is ſet before me. I do moſt heartily take God for my portion, and I had rather live the divine Life in Conformity to *Him*, and Fellowſhip with *Him*, here in the Firſt-fruits of the Spirit, and hereafter in the fulneſs of Glory, than live in the fulneſs of the delights and contentments, that *belong* to the *natural* Life upon Earth, in a way of Sin, and Alienation from the Life of God. I do moſt heartily take Chriſt according to the offer of the Goſpel, not only to be juſtified from my Sins, and delivered from the wrath to come, by his Merits, but alſo to be Sanctified by his Word and Spirit, and to be governed by his Laws, and to be

brought

brought by him unto the aforesaid Fellowship with God. And my Life and Practice in the main Bent, and ordinary course thereof, is according to this *choice*, in a daily walking not by sight and sence, but by faith; not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit, in setting my Heart not on Earthly, but on Heavenly things. I cast off vain desires and hopes, and my expectations of good are from God, according to the tenor of his promises. When I walk in darkness, and see no Light of outward Comfort, humane Helps, and visible Means, I will trust in the Name of the *Lord*, and stay my self upon my *God*. I strive with my own Spirit, to subdue it to the Will of *God*: And in whatsoever *I* am tempted to be most impatient, therein I labour most for Patience. My great Care is, that *I* may not sin against my *God* in any kind; and more especially, thar I may not sin by a Rebellious impatience under his Correcting Hand. *In* this present distress

diſtreſs *I* look upon my ſelf, as being upon my Tryal; and therefore *I* look more diligently to my Behaviour in it. Now a Price is put into my Hand for the Proof of my Sincerity, and *I* labour accordingly to make good Proof of it. *I* am willing to ſerve *God* in Pain and Patience, elſe *I* were unworthy of ſo Good a Maſter. *I* am willing to be Conformable to *Chriſt* in ſuffering, elſe *I* were unworthy of Him. But here *I* muſt ſay again, *The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Fleſh is weak: Lord help my Unwillingneſs.* *I* am called to deny all the Pleaſures of Sence, and to mind them no more; and *I* am heartily willing of it. *I* am called to declare to others, by the Exerciſe of Faith and Patience, the Righteouſneſs of the *Lord*, and *his* tender Mercies, and great Faithfulneſs, and that he alone is All-ſufficient. O that the Power of his *Grace* may be thus magnified *in* me! This is the fruit of the *afflictions*, that *I* look after; and

in this will *I* labour more and more. And through the help of Divine Grace *I* will not doubt of a good Issue, while *I* am found in the way of Duty. To them, who by Patient Continuance in Well-doing seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, *God*, who cannot Lie, hath promised to give Eternal Life.

I am desirous to be delivered from this Affliction (if it be the Will of the Lord) upon this account, that *I* might have a more notable Proof of my freer Chusing of *God* for my Portion, when *I* am not thus driven to Him (as now) because *I* can go no where else for Comfort; also of my freer turning from the World, even then when *I* am capable of injoying it. To have such a proof of these things in my self, *I* should take for a great Advantage, and be greatly Thankful. Nevertheless, for the quieting of my Mind. *I* consider that my present afflicted state doth better secure me from Temptations, which might draw my

my Heart from God to the *love* of the World; in which respect, Prosperity is far more dangerous than Adversity. Moreover, my present state gives me advantage for a higher proof of the Grace that is in me, and of the Power of Divine Aid, upholding me in a Life of Faith and Patience, by which *I* live upon *God* alone, when worldly Comfort fails me, and by which *I* am enabled to overcome Things grievous to Nature; and to get above, not only the Pleasures, but the sharp Pains of Sense; and to Live, and endure with little Natural, or Bodily Rest. Also, it gives me the advantage of exercising a resolved, willing Self-Resignation to *God*, in this Dispensation, which is harsh to Flesh and Blood; and a resting in hope, when there is no present Appearance of Help; and a waiting, and looking for the *Lord*, who hides his Face; and a cleaving to him by constant Love, though he doth sore bruise me. If *I* continue in the Exercise of these

Graces, they will give me a good Proof, that the Heavenly Nature is in me, and will make way for great Aſſurance towards *God*, and full Conſolation in *Jeſus Chriſt*. And yet further; *I* truſt that *I* have, long before this Diſtreſs, choſen *God* for my Portion, and drawn off my Heart from the flattering Vanities of this World. And I know, that in this Diſtreſs, I do not come to Him conſtrainedly, or meerly as driven. For *I* delight to draw nigh to Him, to pour out my Heart before Him in Prayer and Meditation. My Meditation of Him is ſweet to my Soul, and *I* do not love to be diverted from it. And when my Diſtemper is any whit more eaſie, it works unto a Rejoicing in Him. And it is for an enlargement of Heart towards *Him*, that I chiefly deſire Bodily Eaſe and Reſt.

Hear my Cry, O *God*; attend unto my Prayer! *I* will cry unto Thee, when my Heart is over-whelmed: Lead me to the Rock that is *Higher* than *I*. *God*

God the infinite Goodneſs and Love will not caſt off a poor Soul that lyes at his Feet, and cries for the help of his Grace, when it is ready to ſink under the Burden, and is willing to have Mercy upon his Terms.

Therefore, *I* will ſtill cry to him, and look for him, and lean upon him, and will not depart from him by an Evil Heart of Unbelief. This *I* reſolve in His Strength. *Lord* ſtrengthen me unto the perfect Work of Patience.

Lord, *I* heartily conſent that Thou ſhould'ſt uſe me as Thou pleaſeſt, ſo Thou uſe me, as one of thoſe that love Thy Name. Diſpoſal is an Effect of Propriety, but it is always a regular and a loving Diſpoſal of the Subjects of his Government. O! deal favourably with thy Servant. Thou knoweſt my Frame; Remember that *I* am but Duſt.

The *Lord* will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy Mercy, O *Lord*, endureth for ever. Forſake not

the Works of thine own Hands. O *Lord*, without Thee *I* can do nothing. Therefore, *I* muſt beg, and Thou wilt give Grace ſufficient; without which *I* cannot Subſiſt: For therein is the Life of my Spirit.

For Ever, O *Lord*, Thy Word is ſetled in Heaven.

Pity me, O *Lord*, as a Father pityeth his Children.

Comfort me, O *Lord*, as one whom his Mother Comforteth.

The *Lord* will wait, that He may be Gracious unto you: For the *Lord* is a *God* of Judgment: Bleſſed are all they, that wait for Him.

Can I be in a *Better Hand*? As my Profeſſed Judgment is concerning *God*'s Proceeding; ſo let me ſtand Affected towards it.

NOTES

NOTES FOR My Self.

KEep thy Heart with all Diligence; for out of it are the Issues of life.

Death and Life are in the Power of the Tongue.

Entertain not a sensual Imagination for a Moment; and give not way to the least Glance of the Eye towards Vanity.

Be always expecting some Trouble or other, to interrupt thy outward Peace and Rest.

Never expect any thing from the World; and when it offers thee any

thing that is good for thee, receive it; but catch not at it greedily.

Be always mindful what thou may'ſt do for thine own and others Salvation, in every Inſtant, upon every Occaſion.

Die daily.

In arguing with another, watch againſt every inordinate Heat of Paſſion, loud Speaking, and every raſh Word.

If any neglect or ſlight thee, care not for it, yet obſerve it.

Any Matter of Tryal to thee, reckon among thy Gains.

Take no delight of ſenſe, but in a manifeſt and direct ſubſerviency to Spiritual Ends; and uſe not that delight to irritate, but to allay ſenſuality.

When a ſenſual Imagination or Paſſion breaks in, then excite a Taſte of the Powers of the World to come; and delay not to recover the Divine Frame.

What thou doubteſt, do not.

In thy Actions, conſider not only what is Lawful, but what is Beſt in the preſent Circumſtances; and do that.

In

In every delight of Sense, watch against all Brutishness.

When thou art in Company, where the Talk is but Vain, watch to put in a Word, that may be to Edification.

If any despise thee, do not bear a grudge against him for it. And be not offended with any, meerly because they do not honour thee.

When thou art framing Excuses, take heed of speaking an Untruth, or approaching near to it; lest in avoiding the Offence of Man, thou make too bold with God. Take heed of this also, when thou wouldest speak pleasingly, and avoid Offence in speaking.

Use no Recreation or Delight of Sense, but what thou canst at that very time desire of God, that it may be sanctified to Spiritual Ends.

When thou heareſt that another hath spoken any thing to thy Injury or Disparagement, beware of a Transport of Anger, that thou speak not harshly or unadvisedly against Him, or too passionately for Self, or as too much concerned for Self.

Uphold the Reputation of thy Colleague, or any that is joined with thee in Service, as thou wouldst thine own.

Watch against all secret Pleasure, in the lessening of another for advancing thy self.

Pray heartily for the Success of thy Colleague and others, who perform the same Service that thou art ingaged in. And rejoice in whatsoever good is done by them, as in what is done by thy self, and own it before Men.

Use not Animosity and Contention in any matter, that may be brought to a good Issue in the way of Peace.

Engage not hastily as a party in a Difference between others; but reserve thy self Impartial, and uningaged, that thou mayest moderate between them.

Whil'st thou lamentest thy weakness in some Cases, and seekest more Strength, be sure to use that greater Strength in all other Cases, whereunto thou hast attained; and be not remiss or forgetful in any Duty, that is

more

more facile to thee: So shalt thou have Comfort in thy willing Mind, and honest Care, and do much towards the Attainment of that, which thou yet wantest, and reachest after.

In the Time of Prayer, let no business divert thee from it, that is not of present Necessity.

When thou hast an Opportunity of speaking a word for the good of anothers soul, defer not the doing of it till another time.

Watch against all bitter, and over-passionate Speeches, against malignant Opposers of the Truth. For Meekness of Spirit and Behaviour, is more according to Christ, than wrathful Zeal.

Be not transported with Passion against those Conformists, who are more sober than many others; yet manifest too little Compassion to their suffering Brethren. For even in the Regenerate, there is a Remainder of the Spirit of Envy, Partiality, and Selfishness, and too much of Wrath, and

Bit-

Bitterneſs, and other parts of the Serpentine Nature, though in a mortified Degree. And we are to yield Grains of Allowance, for the Temptations of Prejudice, Intereſt, &c. to which good Men, as well as others, are obnoxious.

In thy Zeal againſt the ſins of others, be Mindful of thine own exceeding ſinfulneſs: Call to remembrance thy great Offences, which though they be unfeignedly Repented of, give thee to underſtand what cauſe thou haſt to be meek, and humble, and patient towards all Men.

Watch againſt the Motions of Pride and Hypocriſie, in the preſence of any Perſon, whoſe Favour and Opinion thou much eſteemeſt. What is Man that thou ſhouldeſt paſs to be judged by Man's judgment, or ſeek Applauſe from Man!

Be not diſcompoſed about ſome petty Abſurdities of Behaviour, or little Indecorums, or Over-ſights: for ſo to be, is Paſillanimity.

When

When thou haſt conceived a diſlike of any Perſon, his Ways, or Actions, or doſt ill reſent his Carriage towards thee; take heed, thou do not take any ſecret Pleaſure in the Fore-ſight of Evil coming upon him; or in hearing or obſerving any ſuch folly of his, as tends to his Reproach or Ruin, or notable Damage.

If thou haſt fore-ſpoken the Calamity, or any Evil, that in Reaſon is like to befall one, who doth unadviſedly manage himſelf, and his Affairs, take heed of wiſhing or willing, that the Evil ſhould come to paſs, leſt thy judgment or fore-ſight ſhould ſeem to be diſparaged; yea, take heed of any Motion riſing towards ſuch a Wiſh or Will.

My own exceeding Faultineſs, ingages me in ſeeing and hearing the Faults and Follies of others, to pity them, rather than to rejoice or glory over them; and to cover or leſſen thoſe Faults, rather than to aggravate or diſplay them.

The

The Mercy and Forgiveness that I have found and hope for at the Lord's *Hand, engages and disposes me to forgive Injuries and Abuses done to me. And I should not think it much, that I, who am so sinful, should bear some Contumelies, or Abuses from Men.*

It is displeasing to me, to hear the Faults of others insisted on, whether they be matters of Folly and Inconsiderateness, or of Perverseness and Malice; but especially if the Matter be not evident.

I find, that petty Damages and Injuries are apt to be vexatious, especially in a matter, the Whole whereof is but Little; as in a little Farm or Living. Wherefore, I indeavour, that I be not surprized with the troublesome Appearance, and consider the Moment of a thing, how light it is.

Abhor every Thought, Word, and Deed, which is contrary to Love, and tends to the hurt of others.

The more Men wrong thee, the more watchfully maintain thy Love towards them.

After

After thy publick Ministrations in Prayer and Preaching, be not thoughtful or much concerned, how Men like thy Performance; but be concerned for this, how acceptable it is to God, and how effectual and successful to holy and saving Means.

If God single me out for special great Suffering, I have no reason to judge amiss of it: For such is the state of the things in the World to come, that some individuals must of necessity suffer for the good of the People. And, why not I, as well as another? God is my Owner, and he may do with me, as with any other, even as he pleaseth; and he is my Father, and he will use me well, and make me sufficient Amends for all my suffering; and I shall be no Loser, but an exceeding Gainer thereby in the End.

In this present state of Tryal, it is requisite that there be a sufficient Difficulty and Hardship, for all those that shall be saved, to grapple with.

For

For all our Boasts of Free-will; unless there were some heavy weights of Sufferings cast by Providence into the Ballance, to poise against our propensions to follow Lusts, and Pleasures, and Worldly Allurements, we should never seriously set our selves to the severe and self-denying Duties, which belong to true Godliness.

To avoid inconveniencies to thy self, expose not any to Danger, whose safety thou art bound to provide for.

In all Accusations, whether publick or private, when thou hast made a sufficient Defence, enter not into needless Matters for Ostentation, or such further vindication, as is not necessary, if thou stand in a slippery Place; but lye at a close Guard, lest thou be entangled, or in some Point circumvented.

I will never wittingly and wilfully do amiss, by Commission or Omission, in a greater or lesser Matter, because I shall too often do amiss, at least

least in smaller Matters, through ignorance, or inadvertency, or Surprizal of Passion, do what I can.

Watch every Opportunity to put in a savoury Word for the good of a Soul, with whom thou hast occasion of Converse.

Remember thou hast nothing of thine own, but all is the Lords; and accordingly use all that thou hast to no Carnal Interest, but to serve Him, as being wholly devoted to Him.

Be as serious and hearty in thy Prayers to God for the Concerns of others, as for thine own.

Watch against selfishness, lest it work unto great Uncharitableness.

When thou hast Evidences of thy Sincerity, which cannot in reason be gain-said, hold to them, and take Comfort in them; yet still endeavour by Reviews, and further Searchings, to clear it more and more.

We keep our Evidences, by keeping our Graces in their Lively Exercise.

Fetch

Fetch thy Comforts from Heaven, and not from Pleasures or Hopes here below.

Do not over-value any Worth that is in thy self; but think it rather less than more, than it is indeed.

If any slight thee, be neither dejected nor provoked.

Do not value Men according to their Esteem of thee, but according to their true Worth.

Watch against the Expectation of hearing thine own Praise; and when such a Thought arises, instantly suppress it.

When thou art Commended let not thy Thoughts dwell on it with delight; but let it be to thee as nothing.

Take heed of too great a Valuation of thine own work, or Usefulness in thy Place; and lay not too great a stress thereon.

When Friends out of Love over-value thee, it Concerns thee not to over-value thy self, nor to take more than

than thy due, though they give it.

Have a habit of Compassion towards the Afflicted, firmly fixed in thee, that the Motions thereof may be suitably stirred up on every Occasion.

Let an Abhorrence of any Contents in anothers sufferings, be deeply imprinted on thee; that every Thought thereof may be prevented, or instantly suppressed: Yea, hate all Disregard to anothers Misery.

Watch against all Eagerness, and immoderate Delight in Eating and Drinking; and against minding any kind of Food, for the pleasing of the Sense. Come to thy Meals not like a Brute, but as becomes a Saint. Never terminate in the sensitive Pleasure, but make use of it to raise thy Heart to God.

When thou hast eaten so much, so that thou thinkest more is not expedient, or is better forborn than taken, proceed not to a Bit more, lest thou be intangled or disturbed.

Still

Still consider, Is this Act, I go about, agreeable to one that hath Communion with God? Will this Act promote Communion with God? Do I come to this Act, so as to have Communion with God thereby promoted.

Seek the Lawful Contentment of any that are about thee, as thou dost thy own; and be as glad to gratifie them as thy self, so far as it is convenient for them. Hate and shun all Motions of unworthy selfishness: And see, that others be sharers with thee in thy pleasant Things, and be not content to have them to thy self alone.

Be not over-sollicitous, for humouring thy self in sensitive Suavities, but rather suspicious of it, and be abstemious from it.

Always mind, and do the present Duty. Comply with the present Dispensation, and make the most of it. Thy business is to please God, and God will provide for thy Comfort.

Lay

Lay thy Heart to rest in the Will of God. For there is no other Rest for the Soul, to be thought on.

I will not indent with God for any good, but what is included in the Covenant of Grace. I will expect no good but according to the Tenour of that Covenant, which is all my Salvation, and all my Desire.

I am resolved that Pride shall not set me to Study, or Preach, or Pray, or carry me on in any Service. If thoughts of Men pleasing or Mans Applause, steal in with my honest intentions, I will instantly cast them out, as soon as they be discovered, and I will watch and pray for the preventing of them. I will watch, when I go forth in my Service for God, that Pride do not send me forth. Mens Opinion of Me shall be nothing with me, but the pleasing of God, and the doing of good, shall be my whole scope.

In performing Prayer, I am intent upon

upon God and his Hearing, and observing my Thoughts and Words; and I earnestly purpose and strive against Thoughts about Mens observing and judging of my performance. Nevertheless, I do find, that together with my sincere and earnest Intention directed to God, Thoughts of regard to Mens Esteem, and judging, will too often thrust in, do what I can, so as either to be pleased, or troubled, as I think they judge. These thoughts have greatly troubled my Spirit. Hereupon I consider, that a due regard to Expressions for Mens sake, that they be Affecting and not Offensive, is not faulty but necessary; and therefore must be heeded. And I think, that my thoughts above Mens judging have this intention at last chiefly, that my Expressions be Affecting, and not Offensive; yet I am jealous of the mixture of Corruption and Vanity. I earnestly indeavour to have my Heart so filled with the apprehension

prehension of God's Infinite Majesty, and my infinite Concernment in him, that all impertinent thoughts may be quite swallowed up. All designing and indeavouring to please Men for my own Praise, I do at that very time detest and abandon; yea, at that very time I am sure, I do very little regard either the approbation and praise, or the disallowance and dispraise of those very Persons, about whom my thoughts are apt to run out, as aforesaid. I do my uttermost to prevent, restrain, and suppress all such thoughts; they are a burden to me. There is scarce any thing that stirs within me, which hath less of my Will, than these Thoughts have. There is scarce any thing, against which I do more watch, and pray and strive, than against these Thoughts. And whatsoever Tincture of Vanity and Corruption be found in them, I am Heartily sorry for it, I hate and loath it; and I hope that the Merciful God will not impute it to

me,

me, to the rejecting of my Prayer, or to any breach between him and me.

I find that my very Fear of this Evil, and desire to avoid it, doth draw my thoughts to it, as a Mans great desire to sleep, and his fear that he shall not sleep doth Commonly keep him waking.

These thoughts I *abhor, not only before and after, but in the very time they come in. And* I *strive with might and main against them. If God approve my service, and own me in it,* I *shall be abundantly satisfied; though men (whatsoever or how many soever they be) should despise and loath it. On the contrary, if Men should never so highly approve it,* I *can never be satisfied, if God do not accept and bless it. This* I *am sure of, if* I *be sure of any thing.*

I *discern, that by Care* I *have brought it to that pass, that my thoughts of others present with me in Prayer, are not with regard to their praise,*

praise, which I value not, but to what is it fit to be done by me in that Service, and to their being affected with it.

I find I am prone to be anxiously scrupulous: Yet I should consider that there be inevitable weaknesses (as Impertinent Thoughts) accompanying the first Performances.

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